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A YEAR IN ROME

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I can think of no more effective way for us as Latin teachers to meet the criticism made against Latin in recent years than to make the subject we teach so tangible, so concrete, so full of human spirit, and hence so interesting that recognition of its value will be compelled. There is probably little danger that by making Latin less abstract and in closer touch with human life we shall go to the extreme of forgetting to teach Latin. That would undoubtedly be disastrous. But in this day when the "outside interests" of college life are so prominent and apparently so permanent, when other college subjects have become more tangible, especially in the scientific laboratory, surely any help we can give our students in making them comprehend the realities is so much gain. Hence the great value of photographs, lantern slides, models, and other illustrative apparatus. And this does not mean that archaeology as such is to be the aim of Latin teaching. Literature is always to be its chief aim, but literature as it interprets and reveals human life.

I know of nothing that can give so much help to an otherwise well-prepared teacher of Latin as a prolonged stay in Rome. It is here if anywhere that he can attach literature to life; it is here that he can get properly established the relations of things which must necessarily have hitherto been somewhat vague, and can gather a little store of illustration and explanation which will make Latin seem to his students less a part of some fabulous past existence.

One cannot catalogue the advantages of a stay in Rome. Some are so subtle—though none the less real—that they can hardly be defined. Many are perfectly obvious. The teacher would, of course, ally himself with the American School of Classical Studies. To do otherwise would be to run the risk of letting one's interests be distracted in countless things valuable and attractive enough, but not

directly productive for the subject in hand. The school is doing a good work. In fact, when the meager financial resources back of it are considered, it is doing a surprising work. The library is only moderately large, but it contains almost no lumber. It is a very practical, usable library. And as to the lectures given, it is only necessary to mention the names of Director Carter and the annual professors of recent years, Professors Wilson, Rolfe, Dennison, and Slaughter.

But the great, the inestimable value of these lectures is that they are given in connection with the realities of Rome. Surely that well-known letter of Pliny, in which he praises the character of the young daughter of his friend, means more after the teacher has read the tomb inscription of Minicia Marcella in the Terme Museum, and surely it means more to his students when they see the "squeeze" and the photograph of the inscription which he may bring home with him if he will. And so with calendar, boundary, Arval, and countless other inscriptions in the same museum. In topography one, of course, gets a knowledge almost indispensable, which gives a new enthusiasm and a new clearness of teaching. And these things are interesting to the student, even though they are sometimes technical. When I spent five minutes the other day in my classroom building a wall out of wooden bricks to show the method of construction, I could see from the faces of the students that they were really interested. And it is this newly awakened interest that bridges over places which from the nature of things must be somewhat hard and tedious. In Rome the student and teacher pick up countless details of valuable knowledge which the teacher should have—knowledge which may be found in books, it is true, but which the reader does not really apprehend until he sees it here "in the very flesh." Who considers the form of an oven, a milestone, a mirror, an aqueduct at all adequately until these things have become tangible and concrete there in Italy?

The student in Rome has, moreover, access to practically everything that is of value. It is not merely that he is given a free pass to the government collections in Italy and to the papal collections in Rome. He is given a cordial welcome to the German Archaeological Institute, to the British School, and to other places not always readily

accessible. And Italian officials are courteous to students in the American School. Last year, for example, Commendatore Boni, director of the Forum and Palatine excavations, conducted the school on a very interesting excursion through the newly excavated republican house near the Arch of Titus, and at another time took the school into his workshop and showed the *minutiae* of restoration, interpretation, and publication of newly discovered objects. To see the man at close range is worth a trip to Rome.

The museums of Rome are not overestimated. They are so full and rich, in fact, that the newcomer beginning his study is oppressed by the mere quantity of material. All travelers, even the most hurried, know the Vatican, the Capitoline Museums, and the Terme, but one hears little of the Papa Giulio, the Kircherian, the Antiquarium, which have abundant material for the Latin teacher. And the student soon learns that it is only by repeated visits week after week to these collections that he really trains himself to see things. Then by going through these museums with some one thing in mind, abstracting everything else, he discovers how much there really is, if he can only train his eye to see it. And such training cannot come from books; it is the result only of an intimate and prolonged knowledge of the collections themselves.

But the student in the American School is by no means limited to the school lectures and to the city and museums of Rome. The Campagna, the near-by towns on the Sabine and Volscian Hills, and the Etruscan tombs of Corneto, Cervetri, and Veii are his as well—not to wander over aimlessly and unintelligently, but to visit after careful preparation by books and lectures, and to study under guidance. And the pleasure which comes from the brilliant colors of the Campagna with its rugged frame of mountains, from invigorating air, and from congenial companionship—this is the very cream of a year's stay in Rome. It is not merely improved health and satisfaction of the aesthetic emotions, but a real and valuable education to wander about the Campagna. When one has traced an aqueduct from Rome to the point where it finally disappears underground eight or ten miles out, when he has crawled a few yards through a broken part of the *specus*, when he has photographed its various parts and examined its structure, the story which Frontinus tells of Rome's

water supply becomes a living reality. And when you climb the steep hillside on your way to Horace's farm, read Vespasian's inscription at Rocca Giovine, and stretch yourself at full length on the stones to get a drink of the water of the Bandusian Spring, then, and not till then, can you really read the

O fons Bandusiae

of Horace.

Each spring the members of the School may, if they wish, go to Greece under the charge of one of the instructors, and in four or five weeks get a knowledge which no teacher of Latin can afford to be without. Athens, Marathon, Eleusis, Aegina, Delphi, Olympia, Messene, Mycenae, Argos, Corinth, and many other places give a good general familiarity with Greece, and that without excessively increasing the expense of staying in Rome. On the way back to Rome some two weeks are spent at Pompeii with daily lectures, followed by time for work in the Naples Museum. For one preparing or completing a course in Roman private life, Naples and Pompeii offer exceptional opportunities. From Naples some students each year extend their trip to Sicily, and all take time enough for the temples at Paestum and the beautiful environs of Naples.

I believe a year in Rome gives a chance for valuable work—in the case of the advanced student, work for publication, and for the inexperienced student, a chance to learn the methods of working with original materials. Such a residence in Rome should appeal mainly to three classes of people: to advanced graduate students who need the personal touch with the physical realities of Rome and Greece, or who have some special topic for investigation; to college teachers of experience who have a year's leave for study, and whose class-work has fitted them to appreciate and interpret—men who have "taught themselves hungry;" and to high-school teachers of Latin, who are college graduates, and who want to bring more vivacity and interest into their teaching. To each of these three classes, the school has something to offer. It is not equipped, however, to meet the needs of one who has not a collegiate degree. The expense is not at all prohibitive—not more, travel excluded, than residence at an American university. Rome is notoriously a little more expensive

than most other places in Europe, but anyone who has been there knows it is worth more to live in Rome than in most other places.

The additional benefits of travel in other parts of Europe are equally obvious. The wise student will land at some northern port, visit some of the battlefields of Caesar in France, see something of Germany and the Rhine on his way south, and perhaps visit Switzerland, Paris, and England on his way back to Liverpool the succeeding summer. And that means a first-hand knowledge of the great collections in London, Paris, Berlin, Munich, Florence, and perhaps Vienna, which is an education in itself.

But one must not mistake what he is going to Italy for. It is not for Latin, either the language or the literature. That he must have before he goes, and he can learn it better in the American college and university. But for a background, for a framework for the reading and study of the years which follow, for the culture which comes from travel, for the self-confidence which results from an exact understanding of many things which books leave only vague in the mind, for the knowledge of Italian, and for association with people worth knowing, a year in Rome can be heartily recommended.